



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

APR 04 2016

Patricia Grantham, Forest Supervisor
Klamath National Forest
1711 S. Main Street,
Yreka, CA 96097
ATTN: Angie Bell, Project Leader

Subject: Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Jess Project, Klamath National Forest,
Siskiyou County, California (CEQ # 20160050)

Dear Ms. Grantham:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Jess Project, Klamath National Forest. Our review is provided pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA Implementing Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

EPA provided comments on the Jess Project DEIS in November of 2014. In our comments, we acknowledged the potential value of the proposed project, but identified concerns related to changed conditions due to recent wildfire activity; potential impacts of the project on endangered species, and potential water quality impacts. EPA appreciates the changes made in the Final EIS in response to our comments and recommendations, particularly the additional information provided regarding the Whites Fire of 2014 and mitigation/water quality monitoring protocols. We also note, however, that the Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) biological opinion has not yet been finalized and, therefore, is not included as an attachment to the Final EIS. EPA encourages the completion of consultation with FWS prior to the publication of final NEPA documents because the impact analyses and mitigation measures developed over the course of that consultation are frequently highly relevant to a project's overall environmental impacts. The Final EIS states that the Biological Opinion will be included in the project record once it is finalized. We recommend that the final Record of Decision identify where the public can access that document. For future projects, we continue to recommend that consultation under the Endangered Species Act be completed prior to the publication of the final EIS so that the results of the consultation can be disclosed and considered during the NEPA process.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this FEIS. If you have any questions, please call me at (415) 972-3521 or you can contact Carter Jessop, the lead reviewer for this project, at (415) 972-3815 or jessop.carter@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Kathleen Martyn Goforth".

Handwritten initials "KMG" in a stylized, blocky font.

Kathleen Martyn Goforth, Manager
Environmental Review Section